



State of Wisconsin \ GROUNDWATER COORDINATING COUNCIL

Jim Doyle, Governor

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DATE: May 3, 2005

FILE REF: 3230

Todd Ambs,
Council Chair
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TO: Randy Zogbaum - DATCP
Kevin Masarik - UWSP
Tom Braun - Commerce
Dorie Turpin - DNR
Jim Kaap - NRCS

Dave Hart - WGNHS
Ken Genskow - UW-ERC
Elizabeth Truslow-Evans - DHFS
Amy Mager - WSLH
Tim Asplund - DNR

James Robertson
WGNHS

Henry Anderson, MD
DHFS

FROM: Randy Zogbaum - DATCP

Frances Garb
UWS

The purpose of this memo is to summarize the actions of the Groundwater Coordinating Council (GCC) **Education Subcommittee** at its **April 13th, 2005** meeting. Members present: Randy Zogbaum (Chair), Tim Asplund, Dorie Turpin, Dave Hart, Amy Mager, Liz Truslow-Evans, Tom Braun, and Kevin Masarik. Guest speaker: Lori Severtson, UW School of Nursing.

Berni Mattsson
COMMERCE

Dan Scudder
DOT

Kathy Pielsticker
DATCP

(Vacant)
GOVERNOR'S REP.

1. **Introductions and general business.** Minutes from the January 12th, 2005, meeting were approved as written. Tom Braun with the plumbing program at the Dept. of Commerce will be taking Lynita Docken's place on the Subcommittee.
2. **GCC updates** - Tim Asplund noted that the Governor's representative to the GCC still had not been confirmed, and that Kathy Pielsticker is the new DATCP representative. Randy Zogbaum presented the Education Subcommittee update at the February GCC meeting, reporting that the Groundwater Information Network was finalized and operational and that the subcommittee is losing two more members including Jim Peterson and Lynita Docken. There was also a presentation on a research project funded through the Joint Solicitation regarding implications for groundwater quality from unsewered subdivision in Dane County. Tim also noted that the Groundwater Research Advisory Committee (GRAC) had approved funding for seven research projects through the Joint Solicitation, while DNR expects to fund eight. There will likely be continued refinement of priorities for funding as agency budgets get tighter.
3. **Groundwater Information Network** - Randy reported that the minutes from the last Subcommittee meeting were sent to the Groundwater Information Network along with an email reminding the Network members of the purpose of the meeting minutes and soliciting feedback. There were no replies from the Network. The minutes from this meeting will be sent along with a similar email to remind members of the purpose of the Network and solicit input again. Tim suggested that the Subcommittee re-evaluate how the communication with the Network is working next January.
4. **Groundwater Health Standards Brochure** - Kevin Masarik reported that he has not been able to find one comprehensive Extension publication providing information on health standards for groundwater (or drinking water). He found two old publications about some aspects of standards (UWEX G3338 and G3339) but these publications were not very easy to locate, had some duplication, and were fairly lengthy. He has asked for Subcommittee members to review these publications and make suggestions on a new fact sheet that would combine elements of both publications in a more condensed and readable format. This fact sheet could be made available online and printed for targeted distribution.

5. **Groundwater Festival** - Kevin noted that the 3rd Festival is scheduled for May 6th in Eau Claire. He reported that the planning committee was able to secure funding for the event. This year's event will be a one-day event for 5th and 6th grade students. There are about 600 students from several area schools signed up to attend. Kevin noted that it would be nice if this became an annual event, but that future festivals depend upon funding, sponsors, and local volunteers.
6. **Potential changes to triazine screen** –Tim reported that John Strauss (WSLH) is in the process of testing a new triazine screening method. DATCP has provided water samples from house wells and in-field monitoring wells that are also analyzed by GC techniques. The new screening method is able to detect diamino atrazine better than the old method but the old method is better at detecting other breakdown chemicals. The two tests together are reasonably good for quantifying atrazine and its chlorinated breakdown products comparable to GC methods at a much lower cost. However, the cost for the homeowner is doubled by having both screening tests. It is not clear how the public will receive this, but for now WSLH and UWSP-WEAL will run both screening methods on samples sent in to them. The larger issue remains getting people to test their well water for pesticides.
7. **Groundwater Advisory Committee** – Tim reported that all the members for the Groundwater Advisory Committee, which is a requirement of the new groundwater quantity legislation (2003 WI Act 310), have been appointed and approved. The Advisory Committee will appoint two work groups to assist them in fulfilling the requirements set forth in the legislation. More information can be found at <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/water/dwg/gac/index.htm>.
8. **New well fees and notification requirements** - Dorie Turpin reported that a new well notification and fee system for new well construction would be going into place on May 1, 2005 through the DNR's online licensing system. Fees are \$50 for new private wells and \$500 for high capacity wells. Dorie noted that drillers have been somewhat reluctant, but that the prior notification should improve inspections and enforcement capabilities for the DNR and ultimately improve compliance and well safety.
9. **Well Water Quality Website proposal** – Lori Severtson, Ph.D. candidate in the UW Madison School of Nursing and guest presenter at this meeting, gave a presentation on her research proposal to develop a website that will provide homeowners with information on their water quality. She noted that this project grew out of a survey of well owners who had participated in arsenic testing programs in NE Wisconsin and had arsenic concentrations exceeding 10 µg/L. Some of the findings of that survey were:
 - 20% recalled lower levels of arsenic than they actually had
 - 8.5% did not know what their result was
 - 45% picked a personal safety threshold exceeding 20 µg/L
 - 62% rated their water as safe to drink
 - 50% were engaging in some protective behaviorTwo other key findings were that people seemed to be seeking information about their arsenic results from multiple sources, and that people wanted more information, context, and explanation of risks delivered with their lab test results.

The idea for the website grew out of this need for additional explanation and context for arsenic results, but could be expanded to other well water quality parameters. The basic idea is to create a visual index for displaying an individual lab result, with a color-coded scale indicating the relative health risk. The scale would be based upon information used to develop the drinking water standard for that parameter, and could direct people to take specific actions based upon the level of risk. The website could be further developed with links to other resources for information. Another idea is to add a geographic component, so that people could understand their well water quality in relation to local geology and neighboring wells. The Subcommittee was enthusiastic about the project and indicated their willingness to work with Lori in the future as her project develops.

10. **Miscellaneous agency updates:**

- DNR: Dorie announced that she was working with some well drillers to hold a training/demonstration event sometime this summer and would pass along the dates to the Subcommittee. The drillers would welcome having people from agencies and educational institutions attend.
- Commerce: Tom Braun noted that new technical standards for stormwater infiltration for new buildings went into effect on Dec. 1, 2004. Commerce is also working with some stormwater re-use pilot projects to help promote water conservation.
- Groundwater Center: Kevin noted that Farm Technology Days was scheduled for July 12-14, 2005 in Clark County, and that he would welcome volunteers to help staff the water testing booth. Several other Subcommittee members noted that their agencies would be exhibiting as well.
- DHFS: Liz Evans reported that she was working with Chuck Warzecha to develop some fact sheets on manure impacts to rural residential wells, in light of heavy rains and contamination incidences this spring. She will send out a draft for the Subcommittee to review.
- WSLH: Amy Mager reported that the WSLH was developing a grant proposal to look at the occurrence of endocrine disrupting chemicals in biosolids.

The meeting adjourned at about 12:30 p.m. **The next meeting is scheduled for 10:00 – 1:00, Wednesday, July 6th at UW-Stevens Point with a tour of the Groundwater Center and WEAL in the afternoon.**

Those driving from Madison should meet at DATCP, 2811 Agriculture Drive at 8:00 to carpool to Stevens Point. Liz and Randy volunteered to reserve vehicles for the trip. Give Randy Zogbaum a call (608-224-4524) if you are planning on meeting at DATCP and riding along.

cc: GCC members

Groundwater Information Network

Jeff Helmuth - DNR

Bob Pearson - DOT

Carol Bentzler - DNR

Dave Lindorff - DNR

Jim Gibson - WTCS

JoAnn Savoy - WRI

Laura Chern - DNR

Jim Peterson - ERC

Lori Severtson - UW